

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks. Claims 1-21 are pending in the application. In the office action mailed on February 12, 2003, claims 6, 9-11, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 12, 14-16, 20, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103. Claims 9 and 10 were not rejected over prior art. Claims 4, 5, 13, and 17 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten into independent form.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to because the Examiner said there is no drawing showing second, third, and fourth supports, as recited in claims 9-11. Applicant respectfully disagrees that the drawings fail to show the recited elements. Applicant is attaching a copy of Figure 4 with annotation indicating first, second, third, and fourth supports, thus illustrating an example of the invention recited in claims 9-11.

Specification

Applicant has made the changes suggested by the examiner, i.e., changing "52" to --56--, on page 7, line 17.

35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 6, 9-11, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner said that the limitation "load rib" in line 1 of claim 6 lacks antecedent basis. Applicant respectfully disagrees because claim 6 depends from claim 5 which recites "a load rib".

The Examiner said claims 9-11 are indefinite because the second, third and fourth supports are not disclosed in the specification. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The written description for these limitations is supported at least by the language in claims 9-11, as originally filed. Further, as discussed above, and shown in the attached drawing, examples of the supports are shown in figure 4.

The Examiner said that claim 14 has insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the contact expanse". Applicant amended claim 14 to establish antecedent basis for the contact expanse.

Applicant believes all of the pending claims, as amended, fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 8, 12, 14-16, 18, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Dean et al.

Applicant respectfully asserts that none of the pending claims, either before or after amendment, are unpatentable over Dean et al. However, applicant has amended the claims to more clearly distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. Claim 1, as amended, recites a spring rib connecting an upper portion of the expanse to a rear wall portion generally perpendicular to the base. Dean et al fails to disclose the recited "spring rib" or "rear wall portion". Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 are patentable over Dean et al and the other references of record.

Claim 4 has been amended into independent form including all of the limitations in original claim 1. Claim 4 was indicated to be allowable in the Office action. Accordingly, claim 4 and dependent claims 5 and 6 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 has been amended to recite that at least two partial chambers are separated by a spring rib. Dean et al fails to teach or suggest a shell having two partial chambers separated by a spring rib. Therefore, claims 12-14 are patentable over the art of record.

Claim 15 has been amended to include the limitation previously recited in claim 17 which was indicated to be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Therefore, claims 15-20 are in condition for allowance.

For the purpose of simplifying prosecution of the application, applicant has canceled claim 21 while reserving all rights to pursue the claim in a continuation application.

Regarding claims 9-11, applicant has overcome the issues raised under 35 U.S.C. § 112. These claims were not rejected over prior art. Accordingly, claims 9-11 are in condition for allowance.

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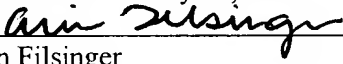
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Applicant has responded to all of the issues raised in the Office action. All of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Please contact applicant's attorney if there are any additional issues to address.


CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on July 14, 2003.


Erin Filsinger
Date of Signature: July 14, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

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Fig. 1

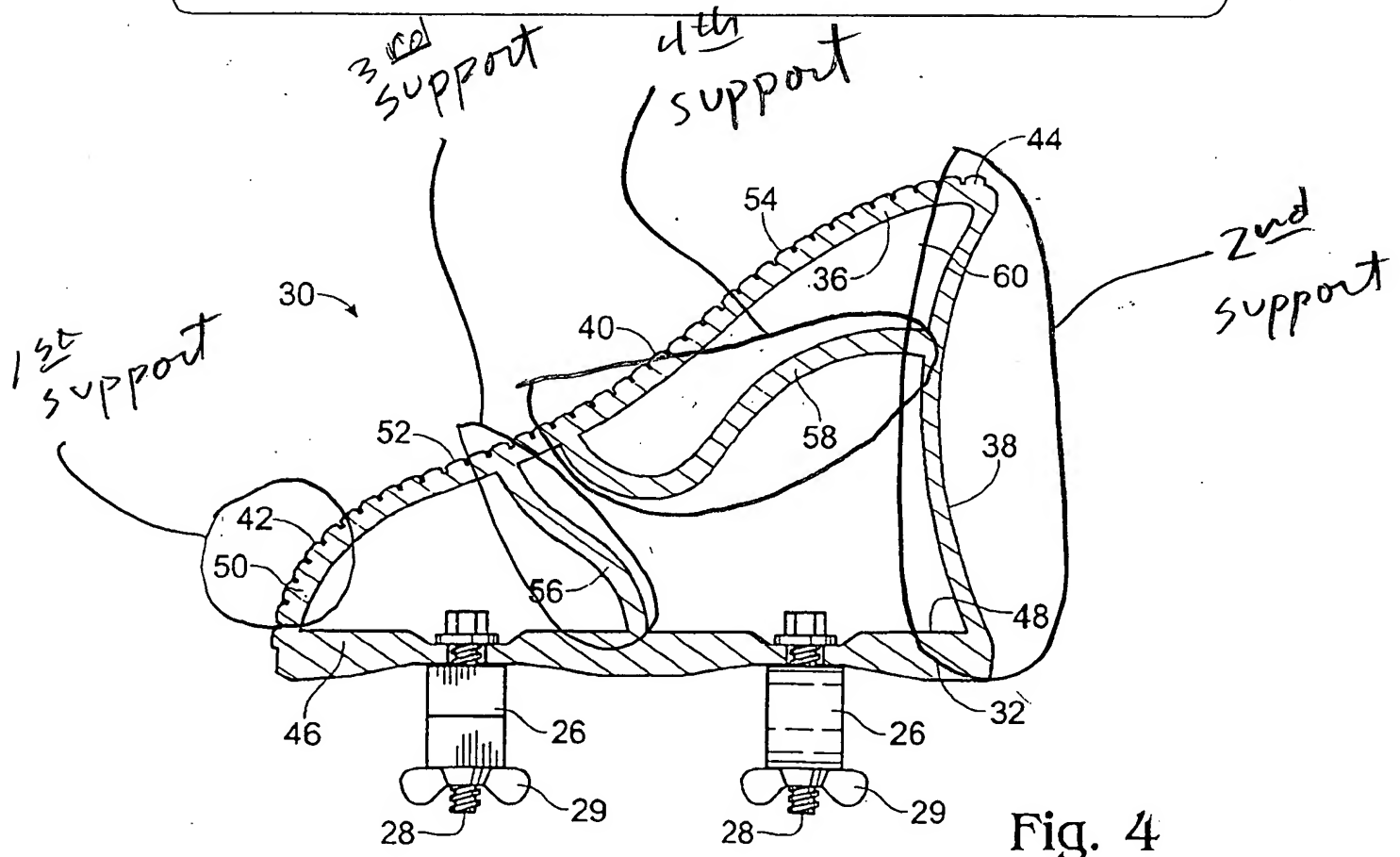
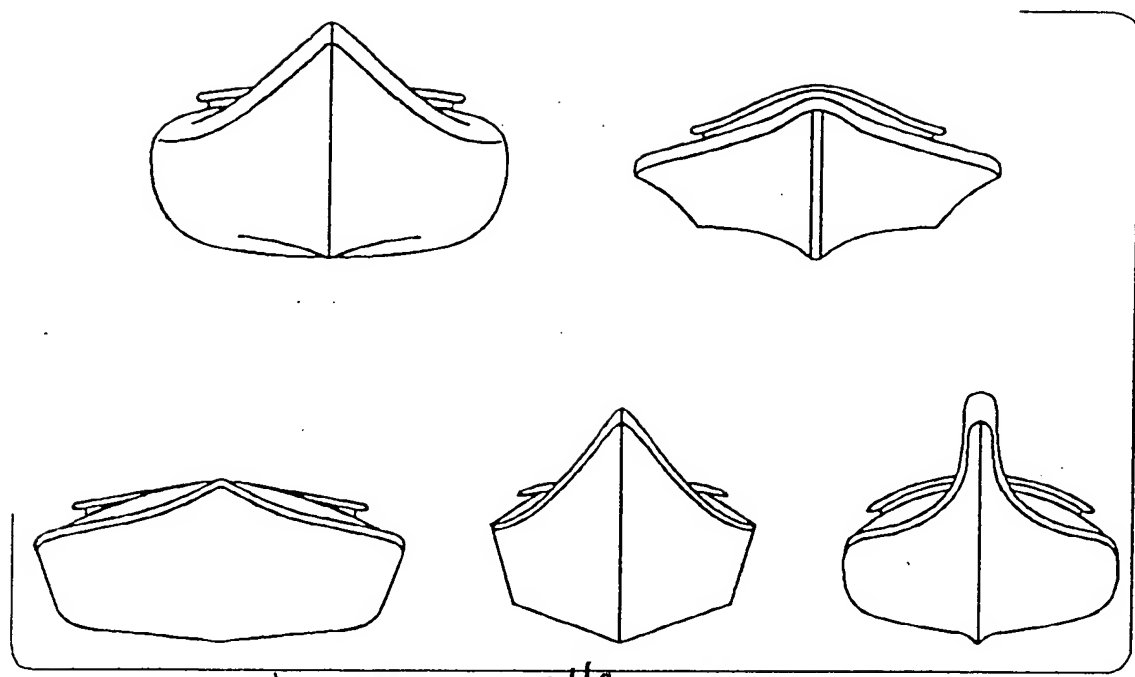


Fig. 4